



THE BELLOWS

29th GREAT YEAR

December 20, 2007

Puget Sound Photographic Collector's Society, Inc.

Vol. XXIV No. 4

WHAT WHERE WHEN WHY

NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF PSPCS

DES MOINES MASONIC TEMPLE 2208 S. 223rd St. (Take Midway exit #149 west off I-5...go to first stop light west of Pacific Hwy. South...Turn right.)

Thursday, December 20th 7:00 p.m. till 10:00 p.m. (doors open about 6:00 p.m.)

This is our very special Christmas feed and gift exchange. After dinner there will be a very short business meeting as we await the arrival of Santa. There will be no Show & Tell, Auction or member buy and sell tables.

'TIS THE SEASON TO BE JOLLY...HO...HO...HO !!!

Yes, PSPCS Club Members, that time of year has arrived once again. The time of year when, for a few days, we stop our never-ending search for the next photographic treasurer for our collection...or to sell at an inflated price on the internet; and we pause to celebrate the Season and join together in a festive group to eat, drink and share happy feelings along with some gifts of photographica for all of us to enjoy as they are choosen and revealed. That is not to say that there is not a small bit of one-upsmanship and greed at work as gifts get exchanged. But, it is all in good fun and in the past only one or two...possibly three..people have been seen crying uncontrollably at the end of the meeting.

Here is how our special Christmas meeting is going to happen. (Remember, this is the meeting to which you are encouraged to bring your: life partner, your significant other, your best friend..either sex..your special guest etc. You get the picture.) First, we will have a meal set forth by our new secretary, Don Friend. It is hoped he will receive some help and guidance from our retired Secretary, Shirley Sparrow, who always put forth a most delicious repast.

After everyone has eaten and burped there will be a very short meeting while we await the arrival of good old Santa..who has once again agreed to take time off from being a 'Wal-mart greeter...to assist us in our famous gift exchange. With the arrival of Santa our gift exchange will begin. To refresh your memories it works like this:

Each person, who wants to take part, has brought a nice wrapped photographica gift worth at least \$10.00. (Now, you don't need to bring a gift in order to enjoy this event. Just sit and sip and watch the fun.) First, everyone who brought a gift draws a number from Bill the large elf's hat. This is the order in which you will select your gift. After you select and unwrap your gift you may..in fact are encouraged to...exchange it with any other unwrapped gift. This means you are better off drawing a high number..giving you more unwrapped gifts to choose from. However, poor number one had no chance to exchange so at the end the person who had number one has the pick of all the unwrapped gifts...thus, number one is the very best number to draw.

After Santa leaves,our special Christmas meeting will end with a bit of general clean up and happy conversation of the season along with sparkling cider sipping and nummie munching.

We hope to see a large number of members and their guests at what is one of our two most popular meetings of the year along with our special Show Experience Weekend guest speaker meeting. See you there. HO...HO...HO !!!

★ ★ ★ BACKSIDE INFORMATION ★ ★ ★

The November meeting of the Puget Sound Photographic Collectors Society came to order at 7:00 p.m. There were 28 members and guests in attendance. Bill Kimber was 5 minutes late and president Darrel held up beginning the meeting until he arrived, short of breath but full of good cheer. The minutes of the October meeting were approved as read. The treasurer said she would have a report at our December meeting...after She and John did their Christmas shopping.

OLD BUSINESS & SHOW REPORT:

There was no old business. Show Chairman, Bill Kimber, reported that everything was on track for our April 5th Show. The committees' next two meetings..in January and February...will take place at 6 p.m. before our regular Club meetings. It was agreed by the members present that since our special Show Experience Weekend meeting will be held on Thursday, April 3rd that the Club would not meet again on our regular third Thursday in April date, but would next meet on the third Thursday in May.

NEW BUSINESS:

President Darrel reminded everyone that our next meeting on December 20th would be our annual special Christmas meeting. (see page one. Ed.) Jim Passi graciously offered to contact Santa Claus and arrange for him to take part in our famous gift exchange.

Treasurer Shirley reminded us that this time of giving and good cheer would be a fine time for members to pay their \$20.00 dues for 2008...our 29th Great Year!.

SHOW & TELL AND PROGRAM:

Three members had most interesting Show & Tell. Bill Kimber brought three items from his recent 1,800 item purchase...including a Kodak box stereo camera and a circa 1920's fingerprint camera. Eight members brought interesting light meters to show or photographic items to identify. It was nice to have so many members take part. Thank you. President Darrel.

AUCTION AND DOOR PRIZES:

Six items were sold for a total of \$57.00. One items did not sell and was then given away to any willing taker(s). John Christensen and Lowell Wines won photographic Christmas ornaments.

Meeting adjourned at 8:12 p.m. for more nummie munching and conversation.

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THIS MONTHS' MYSTERY QUESTION: Answer at end of Newsletter

With thanks to the Western Photographic Historical Society

What c1954 subminiature stereo camera was made by a model train manufacturing company?



THE BELLOWS Newsletter is published 10 times per year by Puget Sound Photographic Collector's Society, Inc. Information for The Bellows should be send to Bill Kimber, 1413 Weathervane Drive, Tacoma, WA 98466-5712, (253) 564-4046, billkimber@webtv.net

The P.S.P.C.S. internet address is www.pspcs.org

Dues are \$20.00 per year and should be sent to Secretary/Treasurer Shirley Sparrow, 300 Pease Road, Cle Elum, WA 98922, (509) 674-1916, sesparrow9@msn.com P.S.P.C.S. members receive first notification of our yearly April show.

PRESIDENT: DARREL WOMACK (206) 244-6831 DARRELCAM@COMCAST.NET



Holding Off Buying

I've always been a buyer and rarely a seller of cameras, but this last two years my acquisitions have declined. It's not that I am not looking; there are many gaps in my collection and I have many cameras with defects that I want to replace — at the right price. And that sums it up — the right price. When I put my "economist" hat on I find that prices are a long way from settling down to the realities of the market place's supply and demand.

I'm not talking about niche markets for rare or collectable cameras that command their own price structure — dropping a little or holding up. I'm talking about the common 35mm cameras that I collect. Such cameras are now effectively useless outside an ever-dwindling number of film holdouts. From the German cameras of the 1950s to the electronic SLR's of a decade ago these cameras were made in quantities of tens to hundred's of thousands — a few ranging over a million.

Just as with movie cameras ten to twenty years ago, supply should massively exceed demand and with such a glut prices should be negligible — as they were and still are for common "boat anchor" movie cameras. I check eBay with a search for "vintage 35mm" every day. The number of listings is down. This is not just cameras but elsewhere. This is the first year where eBay revenues have not grown significantly and the company is reportedly making changes to reduce listing costs and encourage volume. Higher shipping costs, particularly this spring's USPS increases do not help. I think twice about adding \$25 shipping to a \$10 camera. Buying from Europe, Asia or Australia is out for me except for items that my relatives in England and France can hold for my next visit.

Many eBay listings go unsold due to unrealistic starting or reserve prices. Every day you see the same common cameras listed with a wide variety of prices. Looking at sold items you find a similarly wide range of prices for the same camera — it is an unstable, unsettled market. It must be disconcerting to professional sellers who find the value of their stock falling below their acquisition costs. No one likes to lose money on a deal but these people are going to have to unload sometime. The few retail stores that still handle vintage equipment, often at outrageous prices, are in the same predicament — plus have overhead to cover. They will either stop selling or limit themselves to rare or prestigious cameras. The Leica market is unique but not immune; there are many newer Leicas that will never see another film through them — someday they will be for sale.

In fact there are three markets developing. One for rare or prestigious cameras; one for useable equipment — such as lenses or flashes that work on digital SLRs; one for the remainder where supply will soon overwhelm demand.

So where is this glut of common cameras at lower prices? I think there are two answers; one is that owners are just not

willing to accept that their ten year old SLR outfit, that they paid over a thousand dollars for, is only worth a paltry \$20-50; the other is that, as with movie cameras, the value is too low for the trouble of selling. The cameras get left in the closet. Ultimately they will find their way to garage sales and could bring new life to camera swap meets — good news for the Association's consignment table. Me? I'm unhappy at the drop in value of many cameras in my collection and I'm waiting, one, maybe two or more years for the market and prices to stabilize. This will happen when the marketplace gets glutted. Worldwide there are probably fewer than ten thousand serious camera collectors. Once they have the cameras they want from those with high production runs, common boat anchors will be selling at prices I am willing to go for. I probably have around a hundred cameras with mechanical or cosmetic defects. Finally I can get rid of these, particular those with the detested clumsy engravings of telephone or social security numbers.

Tom Parkinson

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The following is from the July 2007 Western Photographic Historical Society Photographic Digest and is used with thanks. Ed.

Visiting the Argus Museum

535 W Williams St Ann Arbor, MI
by Rick Soloway

A few weeks ago I was in Detroit visiting family and doing some research on Walter Teague at the Benson Ford Research Center, and the Bentley Historical Library in Ann Arbor. As many of you know, Argus Inc. originated in Ann Arbor and sure enough, there's an **Argus Museum** in one of the surviving Argus buildings there. While the collection is nicely presented in glass cabinets and appears very complete, it is confined pretty much to the upper stairwell area of the building. There is no attendant or information desk, no brochures, booklets, nor souvenirs — just the cameras in the cabinets. The collection is impressive and I may have left some drool marks on the glass around the Argus Model "K," but the fact that the displays are unattended is something of a disappointment. Still, it's well worth your while if you're an Argus devotee and happen to be in the area. Ann Arbor is such a lovely town, and it's also home to the University of Michigan. Stop in to the **West Side Book Shop** at 113 W Liberty and chat with **Doug Price** (a member of the Michigan Photographic Historical Society) and check out his wonderful image collection, then treat yourself to a super cappuccino at **Café Zola**.

ANOTHER BOOK FOR YOUR PHOTOGRAPHICA COLLECTION:

PSPCS club members Petra Kellers and Ken Morton, who have a book business in the Bend, Oregon area, have e-mailed that there is a new Nikon book on the market. They say:

Robert Rotoloni's new book, "Complete Nikon Range Finder System" will be here from Europe by the end of January. If you are a member of the Nikon Historical Society you can order direct from the author. However, if any PSPCS members would like a copy we will be happy to give a club discount.

They do not say how much the book costs only that they are the exclusive U.S. distributor. They feel it is a, "great book and may well be the last of its kind."

To contact them you can call 888-338-1350 or e-mail at: www.CameraBooks.com

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For What it's Worth

by Rick Soloway

It's always hard to establish reliable estimations of value in the topsy-turvy world of camera collecting. Everyone knows that what something sold for 5 or 10 years ago is not the same as what something sells for today, or 5 or 10 years from now. Outside of printed price-guides that may or may not be accurate, and aside from the opinions of collectors as to what something "should be" worth, we have eBay and the Internet to provide guidance for what something has actually sold for recently. What something sells for does not necessarily reflect the true value of the piece, but reflects the bids and offers of collectors at a given point in time. Sometimes selling prices reflect irrational bids of collectors who simply MUST buy a particular piece, or overly exuberant bids of novice collectors and newbies. Low selling bids can also reflect the good fortune of a collector who happens to get a very good deal.

With this preface out of the way, and realizing that the closing prices listed can reflect any of the above situations (over-priced, under-priced, under appreciated, mislabeled or categorized, lucky and unlucky). Here are some recent real-world closing sales values:

Kodak Gift 1A w/ Deco box \$463.00

Kodak Ektra – no bids \$1145.00

Heidoscop 120 Stereo \$707.00

Kodak Vollenda \$46.56

Kodak Vollenda \$61.00

Halina 35 \$40.27

QRS Kamra \$52.00

Blair Hawkeye 3B \$51.00

If you have verifiable closing prices on items that you watched, drop me a line at <ricksoloway@hotmail.com> and I'll include that info in a future article.

Rick Soloway

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So

What c1954 subminiature stereo camera was made by a model train manufacturing company?

Answer: The LINEX camera was made by the Lionel Train Company. It was made out of cast metal.



Photo from McKeown's

It has a guillotine shutter and it takes 16X20mm exposures on roll film. Complete outfit with case, flash, and viewer may bring from \$100 to \$150.

SINCERE BEST HOLIDAY WISHES TO YOU & YOURS

